

## Best Birthday Ever by m11kewheeler

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**Summary:**

Mike is getting too tall for him and El to share his bike so he fixes that lil' problem in the form of a super awesome birthday present

# Best Birthday Ever

## Author's Note:

Set a year after season 1

Mike was getting tall. Like, seriously tall. So tall that his bike was getting pretty hard to fit both him *and* El. A year ago they had been the same height, but now he had grown a lot, causing the leg room on his bike to drastically shrink. And now that El went everywhere Mike and the other boys went, it came to a conclusion that she definitely needed her own bike.

He casually ran the idea by Hopper one day; a few days before El's birthday, actually. Mike had no clue when her actual birthday was; she had just chosen November 7th: the day she met the boys. Hopper had smiled, telling him he'd take care of it.

Mike and the other boys decided to throw El a birthday party in the basement. Even though she was living at the Byers home now, Mike's basement still felt like home to her. Will and Lucas decorated the room with balloons and streamers while Mike and Dustin tried to bake her a cake (they attempted three times before giving up and just purchasing a pre-made cake at the grocery store. It was prettier anyway).

After school, the boys biked straight to Mike's house while Joyce and Hopper drove El over. As she walked down the stairs, she was instantly greeted with a chorus of 'Happy Birthday' and streamers flying into her face. Mike watched as a smile lit up her face, causing his own lips to turn up. Seeing her smile was probably Mike's favorite thing in the world.

"For me?" She asked, still feeling dazed.

Dustin laughed. "Of course it's for you. No one else has a birthday today, right?"

“Right,” she laughed along with him. Lucas moved slightly to his left, revealing the birthday cake on the table. El licked her lips. Mike had mentioned something about birthday cake to her before, but actually seeing how beautiful it looked caused tears to spring to her eyes. Happy tears, of course.

“There’s actually one more surprise for you,” said Hopper. “But we have to go outside to see it.”

El nodded and followed the boys outside to the front yard, where a brand new red, shiny bicycle stood with a giant pink bow stuck on the front.

She gasped the second she saw it. She walked towards it and ran her hand along the shiny handlebars. “Pretty,” she mumbled.

“We noticed Mike’s bike was getting too small for both of you,” Hopper said.

Eleven gave the older man a hug. She felt completely safe with him now, seeing him as a father figure to her. “Thank you,” she mumbled into his shirt.

“Don’t thank me,” Hopper whispered, his eyes traveling to Mike.

She let go and immediately ran over to her best friend, throwing her arms around him. She didn’t even need to thank him with words. He knew how thankful she was. Mike kept holding her and holding her and holding her, until Dustin came in and embraced them in a group hug, quickly followed by Lucas and Will.

The five of them broke apart after a minute, and a frown suddenly appeared on El’s face.

“What is it?” Mike asked, noticing the change in her mood.

“I don’t know how to ride it,” she whispered, feeling the tears well up again—this time not so happy.

“Don’t worry about it,” Mike said, waving it off like it wasn’t a big deal, which Eleven guessed it must not be. “I’ll teach you. It’s easy once you get the hang of it.”

“Really?”

“Of course. Soon enough, you’ll be able to ride as fast as us.”

Eleven nodded, the warm, fuzzy feeling returning. “Good.”

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“That’s great, El, you’re doing great!” Mike shouted as Eleven coasted down the empty street, finally able to ride it without falling. He had spent the entire week teaching her how to ride her new bike, and El was an extremely fast learner.

“You learned faster than I did,” he exclaimed when she circled back to him.

“Really?”

“Yeah, it took me like a month to learn. But I was also way younger.”

“I like it,” she said, biking in circles around him.

“I think you’re ready to ride with all of us now,” he said with a grin, giving her a thumbs-up.

And she definitely was. She kept up as they all biked around town. Occasionally she and the boys would race each other, and occasionally, El would win. Mike let her win sometimes, though, just to see her face light up with the smile he couldn’t live without.